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Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am in strong opposition to both LD 174 LD (An Act to Restore Religious Exemptions to Immunization Requirements) and LD 727 (An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Requirements for Schools).

As a school nurse in Maine for 11 years, one of my primary duties is to monitor the vaccination status of students. I fully supported the efforts of our state legislatures and the MASN to pass our current school immunization law that eliminated religious and personal exemptions. A public referendum was overwhelmingly defeated by 72% of voters to uphold the law. In 2021, the law was finally implemented and vaccination rates improved. Prior to this law, students often were not fully vaccinated, putting others at risk. In 2024, the vaccination rate of Maine school children was 95% - one of the highest in the country.

Going backward on school immunization requirements is not in the best interest of the health and safety of our students and communities.

For these reasons, I oppose LD 174 and LD 727.

Thank you,

Jennifer Aguirre